

Editorial Boards Across Minnesota Agree: The Nurse Staffing Bill will be bad for patients and threaten access to care

The Keeping Nurses at the Bedside Act as written threatens patient care and access in Minnesota and is not ready to become law. The fact that the bill authors are working to find exceptions to their own bill shows that this bill is not good for health care in Minnesota.

Newspaper editorials from across the state describe how the proposed law as written will reduce access to hospital care for Minnesotans, force hospitals across the state to close units and force patients to go farther and wait longer for care at Minnesota hospitals.

Legislators should not pass a law that will harm Minnesotans' access to hospital care.

["But the crux of the matter is this: Will the legislation being pushed by MNA actually solve the nursing shortage and improve patient outcomes?" – Rochester Post Bulletin](#)

[On May 8, the Star Tribune published a commentary piece signed by all nonprofit hospital leaders in Minnesota.](#)

They wrote: "If these bills pass as they are written, Minnesota's nonprofit hospitals are in trouble. ... These proposals would negatively impact hospital care including mandating new committees to determine the day-to-day management of our hospitals, handing decision making authority for care delivery to external lawyers, fixing prices for hospital care, and limiting flexibility for healthcare partnerships."

That's a strong statement, especially in a state that routinely ranks in the top five nationally for quality of care and access to care. If you're thinking "If it isn't broke, don't fix it," you're not alone:

A red flag from Rochester on nurse staffing rules

Star Tribune, May 16, 2023

"For these reasons, the Star Tribune Editorial Board continues to oppose the bill. If it goes forward, [compromises](#) hammered out in the days ahead — such as alternatives that would deploy sophisticated technology to boost staffing more rapidly than a committee — should be open to all of the state's medical centers, not just one."

"Rather than offering any exemptions, in consideration of the very serious and even existential concerns raised by hospitals, clinics, and others, both measures can be removed from legislative consideration for additional work. It is clear neither is what's best for the health care providers on which all Minnesotans depend."

Lawmakers need to go back to the drawing board on health care proposals.

Rochester Post Bulletin, May 13, 2023

“If such a large, deep-pocketed institution as Mayo sees the proposed reforms as a threat, the measures will almost certainly be even more challenging to the state's other hospital systems. Specifically, they are likely to be less able to absorb the potential costs of additional staffing and administrative requirements expected to result from the nursing legislation.”

Heed hospitals' straight talk, legit and dire warnings

Duluth News Tribune, May 11, 2023

“...the legislation is frighteningly close to being rammed through in St. Paul. It ignores that there are currently more than 5,000 nurse openings in our state, an already alarming number that's expected to leap to 43,000 within seven years.

Meeting government-mandated nurse-to-patient ratios would be a challenge for hospitals and clinics, to put it mildly. Without enough staff, they would be forced to reduce beds and patient capacity instead.

The Minnesota Hospital Association has estimated that patient capacity would need to be reduced by 15% if the so-called Keeping Nurses at the Bedside Act becomes law this session. That would mean 70,000 Minnesotans a year unable to access the care they need, as the News Tribune has editorialized previously.

"How does it work right now? An ambulance comes in or an ambulance is about to come in. The nurse leader, the nurse manager, the charge nurse talks with her or his nurses in real time to say, 'What can we do to serve our patients?' We don't wait for committees," Dr. Rahul Koranne, a hospitalist, and the CEO of the Minnesota Hospital Association, said in an interview in April with the News Tribune Editorial Board. "Patient care decisions are made on a minute-to-minute, hour-to-hour basis, not mandated by committees that may meet only a couple of times every couple of months.”

Read more about why the Keeping Nurses at the Bedside Act will take nurses away from hospital patients:

- [Star Tribune: 100% of Nonprofit Hospitals in Minnesota Are Opposed to this Legislation](#)

Rochester Post Bulletin:

- [Our View: Lawmakers need to go back to the drawing board on health care proposals - Post Bulletin | Rochester Minnesota news, weather, sports](#)

Star Tribune:

- [Caution on nurse staffing reforms \(startribune.com\)](https://www.startribune.com/caution-on-nurse-staffing-reforms/5448170002/)
- [A red flag from Rochester on nurse staffing rules \(startribune.com\)](https://www.startribune.com/a-red-flag-from-rochester-on-nurse-staffing-rules/5448170002/)
- [Vital signs poor at Minnesota hospitals \(startribune.com\)](https://www.startribune.com/vital-signs-poor-at-minnesota-hospitals/5448170002/)

Duluth News Tribune:

- [Local View: So-called 'Nurses at the Bedside Act' would hurt, not help, patients - Duluth News Tribune | News, weather, and sports from Duluth, Minnesota](https://www.duluthnews-tribune.com/news/local-view-so-called-nurses-at-the-bedside-act-would-hurt-not-help-patients-2020-07-23/)
- [Our View: Legislating nurse staffing levels threatens care levels - Duluth News Tribune | News, weather, and sports from Duluth, Minnesota](https://www.duluthnews-tribune.com/news/opinion-our-view-legislating-nurse-staffing-levels-threatens-care-levels-2020-07-23/)
- [Our View: Heed hospitals' straight talk, legit and dire warnings - Duluth News Tribune | News, weather, and sports from Duluth, Minnesota](https://www.duluthnews-tribune.com/news/opinion-our-view-heed-hospitals-straight-talk-legit-and-dire-warnings-2020-07-23/)